

ADMINISTRATIVE  
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7 November 1973

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

STATINTL

SUBJECT: Comments by [REDACTED] regarding the Factbook

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1. During her exit interview on 31 October, I asked [REDACTED] to talk about the Factbook and what should be considered in producing it after the demise of the NIS Program. Her main points were the following:

a. We should review the philosophy of the publication - whom it is to serve, whether it is to be creative and flexible or fixed in the form it now has, whether it is to be an Agency product or fully coordinated intelligence.

b. If the document is to be creative and flexible, the editor's job is full-time; if not, the job is part-time.

c. Data on what people use the Factbook for are lacking. Are all the contents really needed or appropriate? She questions the intelligence and security parts.

d. Factbook content would be improved with the inclusion of national flags. This, we agreed, could be accomplished by insertion of preprinted pages at the end of each volume.

e. She does not feel comfortable with the unclassified Factbook because she feels it competes in an arena where others are much better staffed.

f. Done right, the editor's role should be like that of an NIS Coordinator who checks and verifies and produces content where necessary. At present, the Factbook is not coordinated intelligence and contributors don't give it high priority. The editor should be strong enough to be able to push contributors and to follow through on problems.

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g. The editor should have a college degree, be experienced in government, and have good judgement. The task can be very tedious but it is creative at the same time.

h. There is a lot of correspondence related to the Factbook - complaining airgrams, etc. This feedback can be helpful, and it would be more so if a "write OBGI" invitation were included in the publication, maybe a tear-out page.

i. We need a review of why the countries, islands, etc., now included are there, and not others. There should be a policy covering this that we can stand on when challenged.

STATINTL 2. [REDACTED] obviously enjoyed working with the Factbook and hopes the Office will give it a good whirl.

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[REDACTED]  
Deputy Director  
Basic and Geographic Intelligence

**Distribution:**

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